IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the indicated paragraphs with the following paragraphs:

[0020]   Fig. 1 depicts an example of a network topology of the preferred embodiment. As shown, there are three client nodes, C1, C2 and CN, 1010 through 1030, respectively (described in detail with reference to Figs 4 and 5), connected through network 1040 to server 1000 (described in detail with reference to Figs 2, and 3). The network 1040 includes, but is not limited to the Internet, or an internal intranet, or wireless or wired telecommunication network. Although only three client nodes 1010 – 1030 are pictured in Fig. 1, the current invention is applicable to any greater number as well. Also, note that although the preferred embodiment involves a TCP/IP-based network application, other forms of network communication are also applicable.

[0021]   The social relationship collections of the associated users of C1, C2 and CN, 1010 - 1030 are also shown in Fig. 1 as Collection 1, Collection 2 and Collection N, 1050 – 1070, respectively. The network accessible image of each of these collections is shown as held within a data-store 1080 in the Social Relationship Collection Server 1000, these represented by Collection 1 Image 1090, Collection 2 Image 1100, and Collection N Image 1110, respectively. As will be described in detail with references to Fig. 2 – 5 and 7, the collection images 1090 – 1110 held on the ~~sever~~ server 1000 are updated whenever necessary to match their real-life counterpart 1050 – 1070, respectively.

[0022]   Fig 2 depicts a more detailed component diagram of the server node 1000, which manages all ~~users"~~ users' social relationship collection images 1090 – 1110 and provides web-based access to them. This server 1000 can be any computing node able to act as an HTTP server. This includes, but is not limited to, the products sold by IBM under the trademarks ThinkPad or PowerPC, running the operating system and server application suite sold by Microsoft under the trademark Windows NT, or Linux.

[0023]   The server 1000 preferably includes a CPU 2000, a network interface 2010, a storage device 2020 such as a disk or DASD, and memory 2030, such as RAM. According to the present invention, the server logic ~~2035~~2040 (which will be discussed in more detail with reference to Fig 3), is

preferably embodied as computer executable code that is loaded from remote source (e.g., over the network 1040 via the network interface 2010), local permanent optical (CD-ROM), magnetic storage (such as disk), or DASD 2020 into memory 2030 for execution by CPU 2000. The memory 2030 preferably includes: An HTTP Server Handler 2050 (discussed in detail with reference to Fig 3), A Server Relationship Collection Handle 2060, and A Server Relationship Collection Database 2070.

[0026]   The Server Relationship Collection Handler 2060 manages all requests to create, modify and retrieve the social relationship collection images 1090 $-$ 1110 it holds in the Server Relationship Collection Database 2070.   In the preferred embodiment, all communication between this handler 2060 and clients is accomplished using HTTP (i.e., web-based) requests.   There are two legal requests: Collection image updates, and Collection image retrievals.

[0027]   Update requests include both a collection image and the associated ~~user"s~~ user's ID.   The handler 2060 first checks if there is an entry for the given ID in the database 2070, creating one if not. The handler 2060 then writes the given collection image into this entry, overwriting previous versions, if necessary.   If successful, the handler 2060 returns an HTML document to the requesting client indicating success.

[0031]   Fig. 4 depicts a more detailed component diagram of the client network node 4000 used by clients, C1, C2 and CN 1010 $-$ 1030. For any participating user, their client machine (i.e., one of 1010 $-$ 1030) acts as both their relationship collection source (i.e., the source from which the collection images 1090 $-$ 1110 are transmitted to the server 1000), and their window into other ~~users"~~users' relationship collections (i.e., via the HTML collection-renderings retrieved from the server 1000 by their HTTP client 4060 using HTTP).

[0032]   Examples of platforms that support the client 4000 include, but are not limited to, an IBM ThinkPad running Windows 95 and a web browser such as ~~Microsoft"s~~ Microsoft's Internet Explorer. Clients can also include network-connectable mobile (i.e., portable) devices such as that sold under the trademark WorkPad by IBM, as well as smart cellular telephones (i.e., devices which can act as a

cellular telephone as well as run network applications, like web browsers), like that sold under the trademark Nokia 90008 by Nokia.

[0033]   As shown in Fig.4, a client node 4000, preferably includes: A CPU 4010, A network interface 4020, A storage device 4030 (e.g., a disk or DASD), and Memory 4040 (e.g., RAM).

[0037]   In each case, the Client Relationship Collection Handler 4070: Retrieves the necessary information from the given client 4000, Updates the given user's relationship collection (e.g., Collection 1 = 1050), stored in the Client Relationship Collection Database 4080, and then Updates the server 1000 image of the client's relationship collection (e.g., Collection 1 Image 1090) using an HTTP request, one containing both the user's ID and the new, updated relationship collection.

[0044]   Figs 6a, 6b and 6c all depicts web pages (HTML documents) retrieved by a client's HTTP client 4060 from the server 1000. One with regular skill in the art will appreciate that other client server architectures are also applicable, including, but not limited to client and server applications using TCP sockets for communication (for details, see Douglas Comer, Internetworking with TCP/IP, Vol. 1 Principles, Protocols and Architecture. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1991).

[0046]   Three of the references 6030, 6040 and 6070 are in bold, while the fourth 6060 is in italics. Those with regular skill in the art and familiar with Sametime Buddy Lists will appreciate this is meant to indicate that while the users corresponding to 6030, 66040 and 6070 are currently active, the fourth user 6060, is not.